

St Mary's Catholic Primary School

Equality Policy



Statement of intent

The primary aim of St Mary's Catholic Primary School is to enable all pupils to take part as fully as possible in every part of school life by developing each child's self-confidence, recognising their strengths and encouraging them to achieve their full potential.

St Mary's will take steps to advance equality of opportunity, foster good relations and eliminate discrimination or harassment across all the protected characteristics (age, race, gender reassignment, disability, marriage and civil partnership, religion and belief, pregnancy and maternity, gender, sexual orientation) within the school community. It is also unlawful to discriminate on the basis of association or perception i.e. because a person with whom the pupil or prospective pupil is associated has a protected characteristic, or if you think a person has a protected characteristic even if this is mistaken. Although age is also a protected characteristic in relation to employment and to the provision of goods and services (except for children) this does not apply to pupils in schools. This allows schools to differentiate on the basis of age so that we as a school can continue to organise children in age groups and treat them age appropriately

This policy will put in place a range of actions to eliminate prejudice, unlawful discrimination and victimisation within the school community and workforce. This policy supports our mission statement aim to foster a 'respectful community based on Gospel values'.

Principles and aims

We see all learners, potential learners, and their parents, as of equal value, regardless of any protected characteristic. Our policies, procedures and activities will not discriminate but must nevertheless take account of differences in life-experience, outlook and background, and in the kinds of barriers and disadvantages which people may face in relation to any protected characteristic.

The school will:

- Promote **race equality** and have due regard to eliminating unlawful racial discrimination, promoting equality of opportunity and good relations between people of different racial groups.
- Promote **disability equality**, ensuring equality of opportunity, eliminating unlawful discrimination and disability-related harassment and encouraging participation by disabled people in public life.
- Promote **gender equality** by eliminating unlawful discrimination and harassment, and promote the equality of opportunity amongst individuals of all genders.

The school is opposed to all forms of prejudice and recognises that children and young people who experience any form of prejudice-related discrimination may fare less well in the education system. The school will ensure that all staff comply with the appropriate equality legislation and regulations.

The school will:

- Ensure staff are aware of their responsibilities, given necessary training and support.
- Ensure that the recording and reporting of equality and diversity is sufficiently scrutinised.
- Foster positive attitudes and relationships, a shared sense of cohesion and belonging, and ensure this is promoted in our policies, procedures and activities.
- Observe good equalities practice in staff recruitment, retention and development. Ensure that all policies and procedures benefit all (potential) employees regardless of any protected characteristic
- Reduce and remove inequalities and barriers that already exist.
- Engage with a range of groups and individuals to ensure that those are affected by a policy, procedure or activity are consulted and involved in the design of new policies, and review of existing ones.
- Ensure that policies, procedures and activities benefit society as a whole, both locally and nationally, by fostering greater social cohesion, and greater participation in the public life of everyone.

- Ensure staff promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in the school, challenging inappropriate language and behaviour, responding appropriately to incidents of discrimination and harassment, and showing appropriate support for pupils with additional needs.

Roles and responsibilities

The **governing board** will:

- Ensure that the school complies with the appropriate equality legislation and regulations.
- Ensure that the school's policies and procedures are developed and implemented with appropriate equality impact assessments informing future plans.
- Ensure that the school's Admissions Policy follows the guidelines and directives of the Archdiocese of Liverpool.
- Ensure equal opportunities in its staff recruitment and promotion practices, professional development programmes and in membership of the governing board.
- Proactively recruit high-quality applicants from under-represented groups.
- Provide information in appropriate and accessible formats.
- Ensure that the necessary disciplinary measures are in place to enforce this policy.

The **headteacher** will:

- Implement this policy and its procedures.
- Ensure that all staff members receive the appropriate equality and diversity training as part of their induction and CPD.
- Ensure that all parents, visitors and contractors are aware of, and comply with, the provisions of this policy.
- Actively challenge and take appropriate action in any case of discriminatory practice.
- Address any reported incidents of harassment or bullying in line with DfE guidance.

Employees will:

- Be mindful of any incidents of harassment or bullying in the school.
- Address minor issues of harassment or bullying and report any major breaches of the policy to the headteacher.
- Identify and challenge bias and stereotyping within the curriculum and the school's culture.
- Promote equality and good relations, and not harass or discriminate in any way.
- Monitor pupils' progress and academic needs to ensure the appropriate support is in place.
- Keep up-to-date with equality legislation and its application by attending the appropriate training.

Pupils will:

- Not discriminate or harass any other pupil or staff member.
- Actively encourage equality and diversity in the school by contributing their cultural experiences and values.
- Report any incidences of bullying or harassment, whether to themselves or to others, to the class teacher or to another member of staff.
- Abide by all the school's equality and diversity policies, procedures and codes.

Equality objectives

The school is committed to promoting the welfare and equality of all its staff, pupils and other members of the school community.

To achieve this, the school has established the following objectives:

1. To ensure that all learners have equal access to a rich, broad, balanced and relevant curriculum.
2. Monitor changes to the curriculum to ensure they result in good outcomes for pupils in all vulnerable groups, and to review the curriculum considering new performance measures
3. To advance equality of opportunity by ensuring that teaching, learning and curriculum promote equality, celebrate diversity and promote community cohesion by fostering good relations.
4. To eliminate any discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
5. To ensure that no-one is unfairly or illegally disadvantaged as a consequence of their age, disability, gender, gender-identity, sexual orientation, colour, race, ethnic or national origin, disability or religious beliefs.
6. To recognise, celebrate diversity within our community whilst promoting community cohesion.
7. To ensure that those with management responsibility and individual members of staff, accept responsibility for planning teaching, learning and curriculum apply this policy to all we do.
8. To ensure that learners and parents are fully involved in the provision made by the school and to increase transparency.

9. To ensure that within the school budget, adequate funding is provided to underpin this policy and that intervention, positive action and preventative action is funded where needed.

Collecting and using information

In accordance with the requirements outlined in the Data Protection Act 2018, personal data will be lawfully collected and processed in line with the principles and practices outlined in the Data Protection Policy and only for specified, explicit and legitimate purposes, e.g. to comply with the school's legal obligations.

The school will collect equality information for the purpose of:

- Identifying key issues, e.g. unlawful discrimination in teaching methods.
- Assessing performance, e.g. benchmarking against similar organisations locally or nationally.
- Taking action, e.g. adapting working practice to accommodate the needs of staff who share protected characteristics.

The school will build an equality profile for staff to assist with identifying any issues within their recruitment regime. The school will obtain the following information from their staff:

Recruitment and promotion	Appraisals	Pay and remuneration	Numbers of part-time and full-time staff	Return to work of women on maternity leave
Return to work of disabled employees following sick leave relating to their disabilities	Training	Grievances (including about harassment)	Disciplinary action (including for harassment)	Dismissals and other reasons for leaving

The school will use the information they obtain to analyse any gaps present in their equality documentary, including the Equal Opportunities Policy: Pupils and Equal Opportunities and Dignity at Work Policy.

Promoting equality

In order to meet our objectives, the school has identified the following priorities:

- The school will provide suitable equipment that is directly related to disabled pupil's educational needs as a reasonable adjustment, so they can integrate wholly in all parts of school life.
- Staff will ensure that all pupils are able to take part in extra-curricular activities and residential visits. School will monitor uptake of these visits to ensure no one is disadvantaged on the grounds of a protected characteristic.
- The school will ensure that all forms of prejudice-motivated bullying are taken seriously and dealt with equally and firmly.
- The school will ensure there is adequate access to the physical environment of the school.
- The school will improve the delivery of written information to disabled children and young people.
- The school will seek the views of advisory staff, outside agencies and local schools.
- Throughout the year, the school will plan ongoing events to raise awareness of equality and diversity.

Any reports of bullying and prejudice will be carefully monitored and dealt with accordingly. Annual training will be given to all staff to ensure that they are aware of the process for reporting and following up incidents of prejudice-related bullying.

Addressing prejudice-related incidents

The school is opposed to all forms of prejudice. The school will ensure that pupils and staff are aware of the impact of prejudice. The school will address any incidents immediately and, where appropriate, report them to the LA.

Complaints procedures

The school aims to resolve all complaints at the earliest possible stage and is dedicated to continuing to provide the highest quality of education possible throughout the procedure. Any person, including a member of the public, is able to make a complaint about the provision of facilities or services that the school provides. The school will adhere to the Complaints Procedures Policy. Grievances raised by staff members will be processed in accordance with the school's Grievance Policy.

Curriculum

All pupils will be entitled to access a broad and balanced curriculum and to teaching and learning opportunities which meet their needs, including extra support where this has been identified as a statutory need. When planning the curriculum, the school will take every opportunity to promote and advance equality. When teaching the curriculum, the school will promote equality and will not subject individuals to discrimination. The school will develop an appropriate curriculum for all pupils in all vulnerable groups and will ensure lessons are designed for pupils to develop their knowledge of the world and the importance of equality.

Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Human Rights Act 1998
- The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014
- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Equality Act 2010
- The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017
- Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED)
- Data Protection Act 2018
- The UK General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

This policy also has due regard for non-statutory guidance, including the following:

- DfE (2014) 'The Equality Act 2010 and schools'
- Equality Act Guidance for Catholic Schools – Catholic Education Service June 2014

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Admissions Policy
- Complaints Procedure
- Equal Opportunities Policy:
- Equal Opportunities and Dignity at Work Policy
- Data Protection Policy

The Equality Act 2010 provides a modern, single legal framework with three broad duties:

- Eliminate discrimination harassment and victimisation
- Advance equality of opportunity
- Foster good relations

For the purpose of this policy, the Equality Act 2010 will be referred to as 'the Act'. The school fully understands the principles of the Act and the work needed to ensure that those with protected characteristics are not discriminated against and are given equal opportunities. Protected characteristics, under the Act, are as follows:

- Age
- Disability
- Race, colour, nationality or ethnicity
- Sex
- Gender reassignment
- Maternity and pregnancy
- Religion and belief
- Sexual orientation
- Marriage and civil partnership

The Act makes it unlawful for the responsible body of a school to discriminate against, harass or victimise a pupil or potential pupil:

- In relation to admissions.
- In the way it provides education for pupils.
- In the way it provides pupils access to any benefit, facility or service.
- By excluding a pupil or subjecting them to any other detriment.

The responsible body for the school is the governing board.

The school's liability not to discriminate, harass or victimise does not end when a pupil has left the school, but will apply to subsequent actions connected to the previous relationship between school and pupil, such as the provision of references on former pupils or access to "old pupils" communications and activities. The school will promote equality of opportunity for all staff and job applicants and will work in line with the Equal Opportunities and Dignity at Work Policy. There are certain exceptions within the Equality Act to the discrimination provisions for schools with a religious character including content of the curriculum, collective worship and admissions.